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LETTER DATED 31 MAY 1995 FROM THE SECRETARY-GENERAL ADDRESSED TO THE PRESIDENT OF THE SECURITY COUNCIL

I have the honour to refer to my letter of 18 April 1995 concerning the situation in Somalia (S/1995/322), in which I told you of my intention to inform the members of the Security Council of any new developments concerning the small United Nations political office for Somalia, which is presently operating out of Nairobi, and of the conclusions of the security assessment mission that had just been dispatched to Mogadishu.

With regard to security, a new set of guidelines for Mogadishu has been adopted on the basis of the mission's conclusions. These guidelines include the provision that international United Nations staff members are authorized to travel to Mogadishu and stay there no longer than three days a week. I should point out, however, that the instability and unpredictability of security conditions in the Somali capital since the mission took place have severely curtailed visits by international staff.

I have twice taken the necessary steps, in late April and in early May, to dispatch special envoys to Mogadishu to request the views of Somali leaders concerning a possible United Nations political presence in their country. This effort has yielded no results, because of the opposition of the two principal leaders. Indeed, Mr. Ali Mahdi refused to meet with my first envoy because the envoy had been associated with the United Nations Operation in Somalia (UNOSOM); as for my second envoy, his visit failed to take place, since at the last minute General Aidid went back on his decision to see him.

It is worth pointing out, however, that a wide range of leaders representing the main Somali factions, including a wing of the United Somali Congress/Somali National Alliance (USC/SNA), favourably welcomed my intention to set up a United Nations political office in their country.

Under these circumstances, I have decided that the political office for Somalia currently operating out of Nairobi will be kept there until an improvement in the situation allows it to be transferred to Mogadishu. I have also decided to reduce the staff of this office to one director at the D-2 level, and one General Service staff member.

I should be grateful if you would bring this information to the attention of the members of the Security Council.

(Signed) Boutros BOUTROS-GHALI